

Artillerymen Pay Honor to their Patroness

By Cpl. Benjamin Cossel
122nd MPAD

CAMP TAJI, Iraq -- Soldiers of the 103rd and 206th Field Artillery Regiments gathered at the 39th Brigade Combat Team Chapel for a dining-in ceremony, Dec. 18th, in honor of St. Barbara, the artillery's Patron Saint.)

In addition to remembering their patroness, 14 exemplary artillery Soldiers were welcomed to 'The Order of St. Barbara,' a prestigious order within the Artillery community.

Legend has it that St. Barbara was killed around 300 AD by her father, after expressing Christian beliefs, to the complete exclusion of her family's pagan heritage. Making his way down a hillside after decapitating St. Barbara, her father, Dioscorus, was struck by lightning, instantly killed. Due to the nature of Dioscorus' death, St. Barbara was early on considered the Patron Saint from thunderstorms, fires and sudden death. Early artillery pieces were often unstable, blowing up nearly as often as firing a shell; artillerymen often invoked St. Barbara to protect them.

"It is appropriate, even in circumstances such as those we currently find ourselves," said special guest speaker Brig. Gen. Richard Formica, commanding general, III Corps Artillery, "that we stop and remember our history, our lineage, all those that have come before us, and share in what it is that makes



Photos by Cpl. Benjamin Cossel, 122nd MPAD

Brig. Gen. Richard Formica, commanding general, III Corps Artillery places the medal of Sta Barbara around the neck of Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Jackson inducting Jackson and 13 other distinguished artillery men into the Order of St. Barbara during a dining in ceremony, Dec 18.

the artillerymen special."

Lt. Col. Keith Klemmer, commander of the 1st Battalion of the 206th, welcomed all those in attendance and formally began the ceremony with a reading of both regiments' lineage. At the conclusion of the reading, a batch of the traditional artillerymen's brew was made up. Pouring the components of the brew straight from an expended shell, the potency of the mixture was noticeably tame in accordance with General Order 1A, which prohibits the use of alcohol in the Iraqi Theatre. The evening's ceremony included a special table, with full place setting, as a reminder of those artillery Soldiers lost in the current conflict.

The 'Order of St. Barbara' is a shared heritage between artillerymen of the Army and the Marine Corps. In attendance were Marine artillerymen of the Coalition Military Training Team (CMATT), who provided theatrical entertainment at the dining-in with a skit extolling the virtues of the Artillery, known as the 'King of Battle.'

As the final formal event of the evening, 14 Artillerymen; Maj. Michael Spraggins, Capts. Donald Jack and Bradley Johns, 1st Sgt. Jerry Hopper, Sgts. 1st Class Andrew Freeman, William Bullock, Vernon Horne, Daniel Jackson, and Dwayne Schulterman, Staff Sgts. Luis Ortiz, and James Paiva and Sgts. Gerald Denaris and Richard Gage were inducted into 'The Honorable Order of St. Barbara.'

"Induction into 'The Order of St. Barbara' honors those that have consistently contributed to the success of this battalion," said Klemmer. "It is primarily given to the outstanding artillerymen of our group, but induction has included chaplains and medics assigned to the battalion."

Selection into the Order is made by its current members.

Noting the high honor bestowed by the award, Brigade Fire Support Officer and Hope, Ark. resident Maj. Michael Spraggins said, "This is just such an honor. To be recognized by your peers like this, it really is an honor for me."



Artillery men and friends of the 103rd and 206th Field Artillery Regiment gathered at the 39th Brigade Combat Team Chapel for a dining in ceremony in honor of the Patron Saint of the Artillery, St. Barbara.

The APOD: Hub for all Points In and Out of Iraq

By Sgt. Dan Purcell
122nd MPAD

CAMP AL-TAHREER, Baghdad -- Whether you are going home or down range, you can always count on the Soldiers working at the West Baghdad International Airport passenger terminal to get you where you need to go.

Commonly referred to as the Aerial Port of Departure or APOD, the passenger terminal is the hub for all military and civilian personnel traffic requiring air transportation to all points within Iraq and abroad. Dedicated professionals staff it around the clock.

"Basically, my job is to track all 1st Cavalry Division Soldiers and attachments entering and exiting this theater of operation," said Sgt. Tonia Jackson, passenger liaison, 15th Personal Service Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division. "For example, we are responsible for receiving incoming replacements and pushing them down range to their respective units. We handle Soldiers redeploying, going on leave and pass...wherever 1CD Soldiers go, we know."

According to Jackson, she is in good company, working side by side with Air Force, Soldiers from the Third Armored Corps and civilian personnel.



By Sgt. Dan Purcell, 122nd MPAD

The passenger terminal at the Ariel Point of Departure thrives with personnel, baggage and supply transport 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

"We [passenger liaisons] run a 24-hour operation, 365 days a year. There are two... shifts manned by two Soldiers each and a bus driver. The bus driver provides transportation to and from nearby Camp Stryker for incoming Soldiers who are waiting for their units to pick them up," Jackson said.

"Every day is a busy day," Jackson, a native of Roanoke, Va. said. "We coordinate helicopter missions and fixed-wing air support from the Air Force for as many as 350 Soldiers or more a day. Getting people to where they need to go takes a joint military effort between the Army, Air Force and Marines. If we weren't here it would be chaos."

In order to keep things running as smoothly as possible Jackson explained that every effort is made to prioritize requests for transportation.

"A lot of people come in thinking that their mission is more important than the next...so, we have to prioritize [those missions] according to their needs because we can't get everyone out at the same time," Jackson said. "For example, a Soldier going home on emergency leave is considered priority number one whereas a Soldier redeploying is considered priority number two. We try, but we can't make everyone happy."

However, most Soldiers are generally happy with the

service they receive, despite the occasional delays, because they know that they will get to where they need to go.

"When people come in asking for help, we try to do the best we can...We had one guy come in wanting to push some ammunition down range, so I ran around until I found him some transportation," Jackson said.

In an expression of his gratitude for a job well done, Maj. Joseph Friedman, Coalition Military Assistance and Training Team, pointed out that his unit "brings hundreds of people through here on their way to destinations all over Iraq, and these guys here at the terminal are outstanding...I always get the help I need, from transportation to forklifts. We will continue to work through here as we cycle our Soldiers through."

Jackson also said that patience and good customer service skills are prerequisite to continuing the mission, and liking your job helps too.

"The upside of my job is when I can get our Soldiers to where they need to go and accomplish their mission," Jackson smiled. "I especially like it when I know I got a Soldier home in time for something special like the birth of a child."

Useful Iraqi Words/Phrases

How long is the trip?
kam muddit ir-riHla?

Thursday
High: 66
Low: 39



Friday
High: 70
Low: 41



Saturday
High: 71
Low: 43



Weather information provided by 1CD Staff Weather Office (SWO)

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News Notes

Man Shot in Head Walks Two Miles

FORT VALLEY, Ga. (AP) -- A Fort Valley man walked nearly 2 miles with a bullet hole in his head after being shot in a robbery. Larry Taylor, 37, was walking to a friend's house when a man approached him and asked to use his cell phone. "I said, 'No,' then he said he would take the phone," he recounted. "I said, 'No,' then he pulled out the gun and shot me in the head. I didn't even know I was hit until I felt the blood coming down my face." Bleeding severely from the bullet wound over his left eye and the exit wound over his left ear, Taylor stumbled through the streets until he couldn't walk any farther and finally called police for help.

Bring Fluffy Back For \$50 Thousand

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) -- A California firm that earlier this year launched the world's first cat cloning service has announced its first sale: a cloned, male kitten named "Little Nicky." Genetic Savings & Clone -- based in Sausalito, Calif., and financed by billionaire John Sperling -- announced that it had sold the kitten to a Texas woman for \$50,000. The cloned kitten is a genetic twin of "Nicky," a 17-year-old Maine Coone cat that had been kept as a pet by the woman until it died in September. The client, identified only as "Julie," asked that the company not fully identify her since she feared being targeted by groups opposed to cloning.

Former Harker Heights Athlete Dies

HARKER HEIGHTS, Texas (Killeen Daily Herald) -- For Jack Noyes, the bitter struggle has ended.

Nearly 18 months after being paralyzed from the chest down in a Harker Heights High School baseball game, Jack died Sunday in Temple's Scott & White Memorial Hospital.

The likely victim of a heart attack brought upon by a blood clot, Jack, 20, died with his father, Paul Sr., at his side.

Jack fractured the fifth vertebra in his neck in a collision with a Montgomery High School second-baseman in a bi-district game May 3, 2003.

Despite a poor prognosis, Jack had regained feeling below his elbows and minimal use of his hands after months of intense physical rehabilitation.

His struggles after the accident attracted national attention, drawing a signed letter by Major League Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig and an invitation from the Houston Astros to tour Minute Maid Field.

Astros Team Chaplain Gene Pemberton was on a first-name basis with Jack, as were owner Drayton McLane and



Killeen Daily Herald

Jack Noyes prepares to enter a therapy pool with help from his father, Paul, at The Institute for Rehabilitation and Research in Houston in November 2003. Despite his valiant efforts on the road to recovery, Noyes passed away on Sunday from a likely heart attack brought on by a blood clot.

players Jeff Bagwell, Craig Biggio and Adam Everett.

"Those players really took a liking to Jack," Pemberton said. "The kid was just inspiring to be around."

Even upon death, resiliency was present.

Admitted to the hospital on Christmas Day, Jack survived cardiac arrest Sunday afternoon, only to succumb at 9:30

p.m.

His final words were directed to his father - a request to take care of his dog, Duke.

"I was with him the whole time," Paul Sr., said, his voice cracking again. "I was with him the first time we lost him and I was with him the whole time they did CPR on him."

"It gave me a chance to say good-bye."

Oldest Woman in State Turns 111

SHORELINE, Wash. (Seattle Times) -- Gunnie Foerster, who lives in Shoreline, has just been recognized as one of the world's oldest living people. Her name is now on the Worldwide Table for Living Supercentenarians.

There are 63 living supercentenarians on the list. To be accepted for this elite roster, you have to be authenticated as being at least 110 years old.

Foerster turns 111 Wednesday, making her the oldest person documented in the state.

She offers a gnarled handshake that's surprisingly firm. Deep wrinkles wreath a sweet smile and bright, alert eyes. She doesn't say much. But even with failing vision and poor hearing, she plays solitaire with her daughter and tools around on her own in a wheelchair at CRISTA Nursing Center, where she lives.

Her birthday party will feature Nordiska folk dancers and fiddlers. Foerster will eat cake and wear a garland of flowers in her hair.

"We've been partying ever since she turned 100," says her daughter Marilyn Carlson, who is 77 and looks at least 10 years younger.



Seattle Times

Gunhild "Gunnie" Foerster, with her daughter Marilyn Carlson, 77, turned 111 on Wednesday in Shoreline, Wash.

Gunnie Foerster ranks as 44th oldest, right after a woman from Japan, born on the same day in 1893.

Gunnie's husband died in 1967. She has four grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren and three great-great-grandchildren.

Spurs End Suns' 11-Game Run

SAN ANTONIO (AP) -- The Phoenix Suns weren't as good as their record indicated.

Tony Parker scored a season-high 29 points in just 30 minutes, and San Antonio shot 52 percent in a 115-94 victory that ended Phoenix's 11-game winning streak and amplified the ongoing chatter over just how good the Suns really are.

"They just kicked our butts," said Suns point guard Steve Nash, who scored all 12 of his points in the first quarter. "Maybe that's good for this team, to face a tough challenge like this. ... We can make this a turning point in our season. We can learn that we are not a finished product."

Phoenix's full-throttle offense - the league's most productive at nearly 110 points per game - was ground to a near-halt by the Spurs' defense - the NBA's stingiest, giving up an average of 85 points per game.

The Suns, with an NBA-best 24-4 record, didn't break 20 points in the second and third quarters, and trailed at one point by 31.

"Everybody understood that defense is what was going to do it for us," said the Spurs' Bruce Bowen. "We know they can score points, but let's see what they can do against hands being in their face on contested shots."

San Antonio fell just one point shy of its highest point total of the season and held the Suns to just one point more than their season-low.

Parker, defended mostly by Nash, penetrated seemingly at will. Eight of his 14 baskets came in the paint.



San Antonio Spurs forward Tim Duncan (21) is fouled by Phoenix Suns forward Quentin Richardson during the first quarter in San Antonio, Tuesday.

"You know they are not going to leave Timmy (Duncan) open, so you have to drive it and make sure you go all the way to the basket," said Parker, who only had one turnover.

Report Says White Died of Lung Ailment

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) -- NFL great Reggie White may have died because of a respiratory disease combined with other health problems, a preliminary autopsy report said Monday.

White most likely had a condition that affected the amount of air his lungs could hold, resulting in "fatal cardiac arrhythmia," said Dr. Mike Sullivan, the medical examiner for Mecklenburg County and a forensic pathologist.

The report issued by Sullivan's office also said sleep apnea may have been a factor.

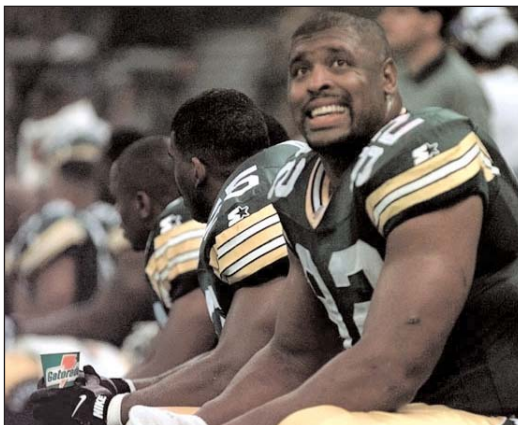
The report is a preliminary one; determining a final cause of death could take up to three months, Sullivan's office said.

White died Sunday at Presbyterian Hospital in Huntersville after being taken there from his home in nearby Cornelius. His wife, Sara, called 911.

White had the disease, known as sarcoidosis, for several years, family spokesman Keith Johnson said Sunday. He described it as a respiratory ailment that affected his sleep.

On its Web site, the American Lung Association describes sarcoidosis as a disease characterized by the presence of small areas of inflamed cells that can attack any organ of the body but is most frequently found in the lungs.

The cause of the disease, which is most



Former Green Bay Packers defensive lineman Reggie White sits on the bench during Super Bowl XXXI against the New England Patriots Jan. 26, 1997.

common among blacks and white northern Europeans, is not known.

White and his wife lived in a gated community on Lake Norman. They had two children, Jeremy, a freshman at Elon College in Elon, and a daughter, Jecolia, a junior high school.

In Brief

Monty Python to Come on Stage

WASHINGTON (AP) -- Killer rabbits and a legless knight. Are these the makings of a Broadway musical? Yes, says Eric Idle, a member of the zany British troupe Monty Python. He wrote the book for *Spamalot*, the stage version of the 1975 comedy film classic *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, now playing in Chicago. *Spamalot*, directed by Mike Nichols and starring Hank Azaria, David Hyde Pierce and Tim Curry, will move to Broadway in February.



Legendary Guitar Player Dies at 74

ORANGE PARK, Fla. (AP) -- Legendary guitarist Hank Garland, who performed with Elvis Presley, the Everly Brothers, Roy Orbison, Patsy Cline, Charlie Parker and many others, has died of a staph infection Monday at the age of 74. In the 1950s and '60s, Walter "Hank" Garland worked with Elvis from 1957 to 1961, and was playing on the soundtrack for his movie *Follow That Dream* in 1961 when a car crash put him in a coma for months. The crash injuries and a series of shock treatments administered at a hospital left him a shadow of his former self. He had to relearn everything from walking and talking to playing the guitar. Garland spent the final years of his life fighting ill health and trying to pry royalties out of record companies.